

 <p>District Personnel</p> <p>Megan Baker, District Technician Beth Eeftink, District Clerk</p>	<p>Spring 2012</p> <p>Bollinger County Soil & Water Conservation District</p> <p>406 E. Main, P.O. Box 199, Marble Hill MO 63764 573-238-2671, Ext. 3</p>	 <p>Michael Squires, District Conservationist Selma Mascaro, Resource Conservationist Kendric Holder Soil Conservationist</p> <p><u>Missouri Dept. of Conservation</u> Roger Frazier, Private Land Conservationist</p>
<p>BOARD OF SUPERVISORS</p> <p>Saliena Dowd—Chairman; Ronnie Reagan—Vice Chairman; David Retherford, Jr.—Treasurer Mike Kester—Member; Donna Aufdenberg—Secretary</p>		

Bollinger County 14th Annual Women In Agriculture Educational Program To be held April 20th

The Bollinger County Soil & Water Conservation District, in conjunction with the Bollinger County Farm Service Agency, Natural Resource Conservation Service and Bollinger County University of Missouri Extension will hold their annual Women In Ag Program on Friday, April 20th at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Leopold from 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Workshops will include: Native Plants In Your Landscape—Getting Started, Fruit Production, Companion Planting, and Composting. There will also be a sun oven demonstration.

Doors open at 8:30 a.m. with complimentary coffee and doughnuts. Lunch is provided. Locally made products will be on display.

It's free to attend but pre-registration IS REQUIRED!
To reserve your seat call 238-2671 ext. 3 no later than noon on April 17th.



women in
agriculture



CONSERVATION PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT

GRAZING MANAGEMENT

Continuous grazing is the most common grazing practice implemented by landowners with livestock. The continuous grazing usually results in a plant community of less-desirable species. When livestock graze continuously without restriction, they eat the most palatable forage first. If plants are repeatedly grazed without allowing time for their roots to recover and leaf, they will die. Plants that are not eaten by livestock will mature and go to seed. This will cause undesirable plants to increase.



An option for landowners to offset the negative affects of continuous grazing is by applying a rotational grazing system on their property. Rotational grazing allows the pasture time to rejuvenate from the constant livestock feeding and traffic. With a grazing system in place, livestock producers can extend their forage supplies and carry more animals per paddock.

Rotational grazing is accomplished by dividing your pasture into smaller pastures, or paddocks, with a water source for each paddock. The livestock are then moved from one paddock to the next. Grazing systems can be very different from one farm to another. Many different factors determine the setup of a grazing system and each is personalized to fit your property and your own personal needs. The best way to determine the size and set up of a grazing system for your property is to contact the office for technical assistance.

The Bollinger SWCD has cost-share available to assist landowners interested in implementing grazing systems. Cost-share is available for the components used to cover the following: Water Development, Water Distribution, Fence, Lime and Seed. Please keep in mind that there can be a wait for cost-share due to limited funds per fiscal year. To be eligible for cost-share for a grazing system you will be **required** to attend an approved grazing school. There are grazing schools offered every spring in this area (see next page). The school consists of two days of classes and a field visit. If you have any questions regarding grazing systems or would like to request technical assistance, please contact the office at 573-238-2671 ext. 3.

Southeast Region Management Intensive Grazing School

Management Intensive Grazing School will be offered May 8 & 9 at MAC North College Center in Park Hills, Missouri. Classes will begin at 8:00 a.m. each day. A field visit is planned for the second day, so please dress appropriately. The Grazing School is presented by Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), University of Missouri Extension, and the Missouri Forage and Grassland Council.

Featured Topics:

- Art and Science of Grazing
- Evaluation of Farm Resources
- Watering Systems
- Glazier's Arithmetic
- Fencing Systems
- Pasture Evaluation
- Forage Diversity and Plant Growth
- Matching Livestock Needs & Nutrition
- Economics of Grazing Management
- Plant Nutrient Management
- Grazing System Layout and Design

You May Also:

- See example maps of systems
- Hear how to reduce hay usage
- Learn how to graze year-round

Registration Fee Covers:

- Missouri Grazing Manual
- Forages and Weeds of Pastures
- Grazing Stick
- Meals & Refreshments

Deadline to register is April 30, 2012. Enrollment is limited on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, please contact Sue Denninger at (573) 883-3566.



REGISTRATION

Cost is \$90 per person, additional person(s) will be charged \$25 each AND MUST be associated with the farm of the first person. Please make checks payable to "Ste. Genevieve SWCD" and mail along with this form to :

**Ste. Genevieve SWCD
711 Point Basse Dr.
Ste. Genevieve, MO 63670**

Number of people attending _____

Name(s): please print

Mailing Address:

Email: (optional)

Daytime Phone:

Evening Phone:

Amount Paid \$ _____

**Registration Deadline April 30, 2012
Class size limited to the first 30 paid registrations.**

THE IMPORTANCE OF WILD TURKEY NESTING AND BROOD-REARING HABITAT

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Jason L. Isabelle
Resource Scientist
Missouri Department of Conservation

All wildlife species require food, water, and cover (habitat). Due to their generally indiscriminant consumption of an immense variety of succulent grasses, forbs, hard and soft mast, and insects, food and water are rarely limiting for turkeys. The quality and quantity of habitat on the other hand can and does impact wild turkey abundance. Since fluctuations in wild turkey populations are driven largely by changes in nest success and poult survival, the habitats utilized by turkeys during the spring and summer months are often the most critical.

During spring, hens are preoccupied with searching for safe places where they can incubate their clutches. Since turkeys nest on the ground and must incubate their clutches for nearly a month, hens select areas with abundant ground cover. Pastures, right-of-ways, old fields, and young forested areas can all serve as turkey nest sites provided that they offer sufficient cover. In general, hen turkeys select nest sites in areas that contain grasses, forbs, and shrubs that are about knee-high. Therefore, providing nesting cover for turkeys can be as simple as allowing the vegetation in open fields to reach sufficient height during the nesting season, which generally occurs from April – June in Missouri.

To create nesting and brood-rearing habitat in forested areas, thinning is recommended to allow sunlight to reach the forest floor and stimulate vegetative growth. As forests mature, their value as turkey nesting and brood-rearing habitat declines. Although a fully-stocked mature oak forest will provide an important source of acorns during fall and winter, the lack of groundcover will mean that the area is not likely to be used by turkeys for nesting or brood-rearing.

During summer, the presence of brood-rearing habitat is critically important to wild turkeys. During a turkey's first month of life, it requires copious amounts of protein, which are needed to promote rapid growth. This protein source comes in the form of insects, which are typically found in areas with abundant ground cover. During the brood-rearing period, open areas become increasingly important for hens and poults. As with nesting cover, vegetative height has a great impact on the potential for areas to serve as brood-rearing habitat. Just as in areas used for nesting, ideal brood-rearing habitat should contain vegetation that is about knee-high. The key to brood-rearing habitat is vegetation tall enough to provide cover for poults, but not tall enough to obstruct the vision of the brood hen. Hens must be able to see over the top of vegetation in order to feel comfortable about taking their broods into these areas.

Since newly-hatched poults are quite small, the density of vegetation is another important component of brood habitat in addition to height. Thick or rank vegetation inhibits the movement of poults. Therefore, ensuring that vegetation remains relatively open at ground-level (60-80% ground cover) is critical. Management tools like prescribed burning, mowing, and grazing can be utilized to maintain the quality of habitats for turkeys, provided that the timing is right. In general, nesting and brood-rearing cover should not be disturbed during April, May, or June.

With regard to species composition, a mixture of native grasses and forbs typically provides great nesting and brood-rearing habitat. Unlike exotic sod-forming grasses, which can inhibit movement of poults, native bunch grasses provide the cover needed by young turkeys while also allowing for movement amongst the vegetation. Native warm season grasses (NWSG) make outstanding places for wild turkeys to nest and rear their broods, provided that they possess the previously-mentioned characteristics. When considering establishing NWSG for wild turkeys, shorter grasses like little bluestem and sideoats grama are generally better choices than taller grasses, which can often grow too tall to receive much use by wild turkeys during the brood-rearing season. Folks interested in establishing NWSG should include a substantial forb component in the mix, since these plants attract a lot of insects, which serve as important food for growing poults.

When managing NWSG for nesting and brood-rearing habitat, again, it is important to remember the characteristics that make these areas preferred by turkeys (knee-high vegetation with about 60-80% ground cover). Prescribed burning (with the assistance of a trained professional) on a 3-4 year rotation is recommended when managing NWSG for wild turkeys. By using rotational prescribed burning, newly-burned areas are capable of serving as brood-rearing habitat during the same year that they are burned, while unburned areas provide nesting cover. This rotational management system ensures that nesting and brood-rearing habitats are available on an annual basis.

For landowners looking to improve their properties for wild turkeys, creating nesting and brood-rearing habitat is a great start because these areas are often the most limiting. Wild turkey abundance is affected greatly by nest success and poult survival; therefore, providing the habitats that turkeys require at this very important time of year should result in improved production and increased turkey numbers.

If you would like assistance with determining the best approach to managing your property for wild turkeys or other wildlife species, contact the Missouri Department of Conservation. The Department's Private Land Conservationists work with landowners on a daily basis to improve their properties for wildlife, and can help you make tremendous strides with your wildlife habitat management goals.

The Promise Continues
Missouri Department of Conservation's
75th Anniversary
TV Special

Follow the Department's history of restoring Missouri's wild things and wild places, and discover its plans for keeping our conservation promise alive for generations to come.

Length: 30 minutes

Premieres Sat., April 14

12 OKFVS Sat., April 14 - noon

THE CW WQOW-TV Mon., April 16 - 11:05 p.m.
Wed., April 18 - 11:05 p.m.

Check local listings and mdc.mo.gov for additional airings

Grazing School Offered - May 8 & 9

By Michael Squires, NRCS

Whether you manage cattle, goats, horses, sheep, or any type or combination of livestock there are proven techniques that can be used to manage pastures while improving animal performance. These management techniques will also help you to save money. After all, today's economic situation demands efficiency of performance in almost all business aspects including grazing and pasture management.

Some livestock owners might think that owning a few head of grazing animals doesn't require much management. Supplemental feeding is not really needed as long as there are a few acres available to provide forage. Not so. One common misunderstanding, here in the Ozarks, is how many acres are needed to support grazing animals on a year-round basis.

The Missouri Forage and Grassland Council along with the USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Missouri University Extension Office is once again offering the Spring Grazing School scheduled for May 8th & 9th. The school will be held at the Mineral Area College North Campus in Park Hills. This school is a requirement if applying for Soil and Water Conservation District grazing system cost-share but beyond that is an excellent opportunity to learn proven grassland and livestock management techniques.

If you are interested in making improvements in your livestock operation relating to grazing management please plan to attend. Reserve your seat as soon as possible as space is limited. For registration material & additional information, stop by or telephone the USDA-NRCS at your local USDA Service Center. You may also telephone the Ste. Genevieve SWCD directly to register (573-883-3566) and speak to Sue Denninger.

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Equipment Rental

The Bollinger County SWCD & Missouri Department of Conservation have the following equipment available for completing your farming practices:

7' No-till Drill—\$10.00/acre
10' No-till Drill—\$10.00/acre
Pasture Renovator—\$6.00/acre
Root Plow—\$10.00/day
Wildlife Food Plot (1 row) Planter
Burn Spray Trailer